THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

ABRIDGED AND EXPLAINED,
SETTING FORTH THE HINDU CREED,
DISCIPLINE AND IDEALS

BY

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NOTE

This is one of a series of Study Books which the Federation of International Fellowships is issuing for the use of students The other books in this series are "Studies in the Gospels" by Father Verner Elwin, of Gond Seva Mandal, Karanjia, Central Provinces, and "Studies in the Quran by Prof Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, of St Stephen's College, Delhi

Each author has endeavoured to give the positive teachings of the religion with which he is concerned without any effort to accommodate its teachings to those of other religions None of the authors claims authority to write in a representative character, but each interprets to the readers his own understanding and appreciation of the religion which he is sincerely trying to follow

The books are primarily meant for the students who belong to the religion with which each deals, but it is hoped that, after understanding the fundamental teachings of their own religions, the readers will endeavour to study and appreciate the teachings of religions other than their own, for which also these books may be of help and enable them to understand the common elements in all religions with a view to pooling their resources in co-operative thinking and action They may also help readers to understand the points of difference between the several religions in order that young men and women following different faiths may come together in an atmosphere of fuller understanding, to the end that each may enrich and be enriched by the experiences of others and thus be enabled more earnestly to seek for the Truth

INTRODUCTORY

The *Gita* is one of the most authoritative sources of Hindu doctrine and ethics, and is accepted as such by Hindus of all denominations. A study of even selections from it, strengthened by earnest meditation, will enable young men and women to understand the religion of our fathers, which is the background of all the noble philosophy, art, literature and civilisation that we have inherited.

There are many excellent translations of the *Gita* in English and Indian spoken languages. For scholars the works of Sri Sankaracharya and other great religious teachers are mines of knowledge before which any modern notes are but chaff. The following pages are intended for students who have not the equipment and time for studying the original text with any of these great commentaries.

The *Gita* is a chapter in the *Mahabharata*. It begins by describing the agitation

of Arjuna when he saw men arranged on either side for mutual slaughter, and into this scene is fitted the exposition of Hindu *Dharma*, in terms of what Krishna spoke to Arjuna in order to quell his agitation and clear his doubts. Krishna speaks throughout the *Gita* as God Himself.

In spite of what is stated in the previous paragraph the student should note that the *Gita* as a scripture of Hinduism stands apart from the *Mahabharata*. The context has rightly dwindled into insignificance, practically disappeared in orthodox Hindu interpretation. To take the battle of Kurukshetra literally and to interpret all that is said in the *Gita* in the light of the motive of the particular scene would not only not help the student to understand the *Gita* aright, but actually lead him to error. It is true that the teachings in the *Gita* being of universal validity would be applicable to the *Mahabharata* scene also and must help to solve Arjuna's problems and doubts. But it will not serve to help us to understand the teaching aright if we are obsessed by the

particular scene and seek to interpret the general by the particular. We should forget the battle-scene when we study the *Gita* as a scripture of *Sanatana Dharma.*

There are eighteen chapters in the *Gita* and seven hundred *slokas* in all. In the following pages 227 *slokas* are quoted. A study of them is enough to give a fairly good grasp of the *Bhagavad-Gita.*

The *Bhagavad-Gita* purported to give nothing new beyond what had previously been taught by the older *Rishis.* It contented itself with a conservative synthesis of the older teachings. Neither does this book propose to give any new interpretation of the *Bhagavad-Gita.* Let the reader not expect to read, in the following pages, any old interpretations controverted or any newly invented explanations offered for consumption. This little book aims at a simplification of the *Gita*-content, and bringing it within a small compass so as to enable the modern student to understand in the midst of his other studies, the faith, discipline and ideals that lighted the path

of life for the best of our forefathers, and to which is given the name, *Sanatana-Dharma* or Hinduism.

A little knowledge of the laws of nature and the wonders of science, specially when that knowledge is acquired second-hand, without the chastening influence of effort and investigation, acts as a wine on some natures. Their sense of proportion is upset. The unknown is not only unknown but ceases to exist for them. Holy books and scriptures are to them ancient folly; nay worse, they are looked upon as instruments and deliberate devices for the practice of fraud. But those who have struggled to obtain deeper knowledge of the natural sciences and who, therefore, know enough to retain their sense of proportion and judgment, know that the vast unknown is ever so much more than what is known, and that while human intelligence may bring under its domain more and more as time goes on, there is a necessary residuum that cannot be either ignored or brought under the sway of man's intelligence. These

men and women not only preserve their humility, but, on account of their very knowledge of the secrets of nature, bow with increased humility and reverence in the presence of that which must ever remain outside the pale of human analysis.

The cause of all causes, the law of all laws cannot be seized by the highest effort of human reasoning or investigation. Human reason is so well organised and so perfectly fashioned and rounded off that it has lost the very sense of limitation. But the fact remains that the part cannot comprehend the whole, however excellently it may be shaped. The symbol of the serpent with the tail in its mouth as if swallowing itself illustrates the limitation of the human mind in its efforts to grasp the All. Even a giant cannot stand on a platform and lift it also. We cannot jump off the ultimate cause on which we stand and on which we depend for every motion of our minds, in order that we may get round it and measure it or attempt to lift it. The stomach cannot digest itself beyond a certain degree,

at which stage its powers of digestion cease. Likewise, human analysis cannot analyse itself beyond a certain stage.

This limitation on human knowledge is a familiar boundary in scientific and philosophical investigations. Dive into any truth or investigate any phenomenon or examine any distinction deep enough, and at a certain point we reach the unknowable and further progress is stopped; — we strike against God, so to say, in every thing. The Unknowable is all-pervading. The known and knowable make up but a thin surface-crust over a mystery-sphere of infinite dimensions.

Religions and holy books, and the sayings and doings of holy men deal with this Infinite Unknown, not as science deals with matter, but in a different and the only possible way. It may be asked why any one should worry about the unknown, of what use is it? The answer is that to ignore the real is foolish. The Unknown is no less real because it is unknown. We know this

much about it,—that it *is* there and has profound relation to all that exists including ourselves. How then can we ignore it? The gap in human perception, we know, is not a void but filled with the most important Reality; only, we cannot dive into it, analyse it or understand it. The mathematician must and does deal with quantities that are too great or too small for definition, and with expressions that are for the human understanding wholly unreal. Yet infinity, zero, and surds and the roots of negative quantities are not neglected in mathematics, but go greatly to make up a science which actually helps engineers and mechanics to build real and useful constructions. The insoluble and the infinite are neither unreal nor useless for practical life. To take the simplest cases, we can never work out *in arithmetical quantity* the exact proportion of the side of the square to the diagonal or of the circumference of a circle to its diameter, but squares and circles are drawn to order, and we build and manufacture thereupon. What is said in the *Gita*, the *Upanishads* and other

holy books of the world is often not as precise or clear as we would want it to be. The explanations are not as satisfying as the proofs we find in the earlier chapters of books on the material sciences or mathematics. This is necessarily so, because the matter is wholly different and the approach and methods of application also must differ. Things within the domain of human reasoning can be defined and proved. But for the things beyond, faith and meditation come in to function. The scriptures and holy books must be looked upon as helps to assist reverent meditation by which alone the human mind can get glimpses into the truth beyond. By cultivation of purity of mind and action, and by meditation and prayer, what sounded first but as an empty jingle of antithetic phrases gets substance and meaning, what was obscure gets a strange and new light by which we may see dimly; though, often, what we see we may not even be able to relate to others. Thus it was our fathers saw, and thus again we may also see.

A reverent spirit is necessary to understand any religion. To start with a suspicion that the founders and teachers of Religion in any land were skilful deceivers interested in some scheme of self-advancement or the advantage of some particular class, and that the rest of the people were duped to regard these deceivers with unbounded reverence and affection is foolish in the extreme. The mass of the people of ancient days, from whom, indeed, we have inherited all the intellect we possess, were as practical as we are, were as interested in knowing the truth about men and things as we are, and were, if it may be so put, as suspicious as we are. They had probably as *much intellectual acumen as we have, and had indeed more time to examine men and things.* To believe that they were duped, and that no body among them was intelligent and bold enough to prevent the mischief is to proceed on a wholly wrong assumption. The religions that have commanded the devotion of successive generations of normal human beings in any

country have done so because by direct personal knowledge first, and experience handed down as tradition from one generation to another, the founders and teachers of the religions were known to be good, sincere and deep-thinking men, worthy of being followed. It is not merely foolish to display the C. I. D. mentality when studying a religion. It incapacitates one even to understand it. Undoubtedly personal and class interests have perverted religion as they have perverted other institutions. But to confuse the later with the earlier and to impute fraud to the source is an unscientific attitude of mind in the investigation of truth. The *Rishis* of our land, who have bequeathed to us great thoughts, were *Rishis* and no less. It is in a spirit of reverent affection that we should approach the study of an ancient Scripture.

CHAPTER II

THE SOUL

The first step in religion is the realisation of the existence of an entity behind the apparent body, *i.e.*, the Soul. The visible body is not the whole reality. There is within it an unseen but ever active master of the house, the *Dehi*, देही, the possesser of the body, whose existence we should realise before we can live the true life. This entity, the Self, should not be confused with the intangible functions of the brain. It is not mere Thought, Perception, Emotion, Will or Discriminative Intelligence. These are all but functions of the physical body. The Soul is an entity apart from and behind all these functions. It is not seated in any particular part of the body but pervades the whole of it and all the senses, unaffected by the law of "extension" even as Ether is taken to pervade the whole of space and matter by the physicists. Not only man, but every

animal and plant, every living thing has a Soul. The body is but the field for action, the *Kshetra*, which is taken possession of by the Soul, who is the *Kshetri*, or *Kshetrajna*.

The Soul does not cease to exist when the body dies and is buried, burnt or eaten up by wild birds or beasts. Grief over death is foolish, the Soul being incapable of death. It is the body that is cast off in death even as we cast off old clothes.

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥

The Lord said

You grieve for those that are not to be grieved for, yet you speak words of seeming wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead

II-11

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥

Verily, at no time was I not, nor thou, nor these chiefs of men, nor shall we ever cease to be hereafter.

II-12

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥

As the soul dwelling in the body goes through childhood, youth and old age, so it moves on to another body, the wise are not disturbed in mind over it

II-13

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति ॥

Know that to be indestructible by which all these are pervaded Nor can any one work the destruction of that imperishable entity.

II-17

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन्नायं
भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो
न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥

The soul is not born, nor doth it die, nor having been, ceaseth at any time to be unborn, unchanging, ever-abiding, primeval, it is not killed when the body is killed

II 20

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय
नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा-
न्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥

As a man, casting off worn-out garments, puts on new ones, so the soul, casting off worn-out bodies, enters into new bodies

II-22

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।
नित्य सर्वगत स्थाणुरचलोऽय सनातन ॥

It is uncleavable, it is incombustible, it cannot be drenched or be dried, it abides for ever, all pervasive, stable, immovable, primeval.

II-24

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।
तस्मादेव विदित्वैन नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥

It is declared about it that it is unmanifest, incomprehensible and immutable, knowing it as such, you should not grieve.

II 25

देही नित्यमवध्योऽय देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।
तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्व शोचितुमर्हसि ॥

This dweller in the body of everyone is ever-abiding and invulnerable It is not for you, therefore, to grieve for any creature

II 30

यावत्सञ्जायते किञ्चित्सत्त्व स्थावरजगमम् ।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसयोगात्तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥

Whatsoever life is born, fixed or moving, know that it comes to be from the union between a body and a soul

XIII 27

यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते ।
सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथाऽऽत्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥

As the all-pervading ether is too subtle to be affected by anything it pervades, so seated everywhere in the body the self is unaffected.

XIII-33

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥

As the one sun irradiates the whole earth, so the soul irradiates the whole body.

XIII-34

one or other of these schools. It is scripture for all the three schools of Hindu thought. The doctrine of *Karma*, the law *that governs the individual soul, is accepted by all the three schools.*

The soul's dwelling place *is a casing of body and senses and a co-ordinating mind.* This casing is made out of and is established in the world of matter. When it departs from one such body it takes with it a load of character or *Gunas* as developed by the activities so far gone through. This makes the start for the next body. The soul takes the earthy *Gunas* in its passage from one life to another, as the wind takes with it the fragrance from the bowers through which it passes.

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥

A fragment of Mine own Self becomes in the world of living things an immortal soul; It attracts to itself the five senses and a controlling mind, all six established in matter.

XV-7

शरीर यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वर ।
गृहीत्वैतानि सयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात् ॥

The soul, when it takes up lordship over a body and when it leaves it, takes these with it as the wind takes fragrances from bower to bower wherever it rests

XV 8

श्रोत्र चक्षु स्पर्शन च रसन घ्राणमेव च ।
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चाय विषयानुपसेवते ॥

Enthroned in the ear, the eye, and in the organs of touch, taste and smell, and in the mind also, it enjoys the objects of the senses

XV 9

Man evolves himself exactly according to his actions, the process being unbroken by death and passing on to the next life. No explanation or theory in regard to the ultimate cause of things can be free from objections or difficulties from the rationalist point of view But on the assumption of an immortal soul as the basis of personality, no theory can be formulated more in conformity with the known laws of nature than the Hindu doctrine of *Karma* This, the most important doctrine in Hindu religion, is the application in the moral

sphere of the law of conservation of energy, and indeed may be termed a deduction therefrom. Cause and effect must be equivalent. As death is only disintegration of the body, and not of the soul, the law of cause and effect as far as the soul is concerned takes no account of, but continues to operate beyond death. The death of the body does not operate as a bankruptcy court. The old account is carried over.

The tiniest pebble thrown into water produces a ripple. The effect may not be perceived by the naked eye, but the disturbance is carried onwards in ever-widening circles on the water. One ripple may cut across, add itself to, and be merged in another, increasing or reducing it, but not the tiniest movement can go for naught. Likewise also do all our acts—and acts include thoughts—produce results. The most transient and secret thought entertained in the mind ruffles the calm of the Spirit Universal, and the disturbance has to be worked off.

Apart from the effect on others, and

from any question of reward or punishment, every thought or act, good or bad, has at once an effect on oneself Every motion of the mind deals a stroke with chisel and mallet, whether one wants or not, on one's own character, and its evolution is made better or worse thereby If I think evil to day, I think it more readily and persistently to morrow, and likewise is it with good thoughts If I control or calm myself, it becomes more spontaneous, more easy next time and this goes on progressively At death, whatever character has been hammered out by the thoughts and deeds and repentances of the life that is closed continues to attach itself as the initial start of character for the Soul in its next journey

Karma is not Fatalism It is not an arbitrary and external agency which makes personal effort of no avail On the contrary, the theory places one s evolution in one's own hands completely, and even death does not interfere with the progress of effort

It is well known that facial appearance and certain other physical characteristics and

some maladies and even mental traits are passed on from parents to children. This heredity does not interfere, however, with any soul being lodged in any body, in which it has earned the fitness to function. Bodies are only the lodgments provided for souls even as engineers may build in similar or varying types for citizens to choose and live in, according to their needs. A house may be improved or even damaged by the occupant. The next person who comes into the tenement does so because it suits his own condition. A father may ruin the coming son's body, but who comes as that son depends on that soul's condition. When a son is born to parents, he appears to inherit their physical and mental characteristics, but in reality what he inherits is his own previous life's accumulation, by reason of which he is born as son to such parents. The *aurasa* son is such only in the physical body. In the soul, even an *aurasa* son is, so to say, but an adopted son. The law of heredity does not dispense with or interfere with the operation of the law of *Karma*.

Besides XV. 7, 8 and 9 already quoted,

the following *slokas* may be studied in this connection —

प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव विद्ध्यनादी उभावपि ।
विकारांश्च गुणांश्चैव विद्धि प्रकृतिसम्भवान् ॥

Know that matter and soul are both without beginning, and that all material forms, phenomena and qualities come out of matter

XIII 20

कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते ।
पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥

Out of material nature are produced causes and effects, but the soul has brought about and reaps the pleasure and pain

XIII-21

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान्गुणान् ।
कारणं गुणसंगोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥

The soul established in matter enjoys the qualities born of matter, attachment to this enjoyment is the cause of its births in good and evil wombs

XIII 22

CHAPTER IV

GOD AND NATURE

All the physical elements of nature including the material bodies of animate beings and their sensory and mental functions may be grouped together forming the ever-changing physical aspect of the universe. This is called *Prakriti* (प्रकृति). Behind the animate is the Soul that dwells within each being and animates it. *Behind all again* is the Supreme Being whose power it is that holds together all the changing visible in one organic existence. He dwells within and supports and moves everything, but exists apart from all.

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।
अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥

Earth, water, fire, air, ether, thought, reasoning and consciousness of individuality—these are the eightfold divisions of My nature.

VII-4

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥

This that I have recounted is My inferior nature Know My other and higher nature, the life principle by which the universe is upheld

VII 5

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।
अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥

Know this to be the seat of birth of all beings I am the origin of the whole universe and that into which it dissolves

VII-6

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय ।
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥

There is naught whatsoever higher than Me This universe hangs together on Me, as pearls on a string

VII 7

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभाऽस्मि शशिसूर्ययोः ।
प्रणवः सर्ववेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु ॥

I am the taste in water, I am the radiance in the sun and the moon, the sacred *OM* in all the Vedas, I am sound in universal space, I am virility in men

VII-8

पुण्यो गन्ध पृथिव्या च तेजश्चास्मि विभावसौ ।
जीवन सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चास्मि तपस्विषु ॥

I am the sweet fragrance of the earth and the heat in the fire, the life in all beings, the austerity in ascetics.

VII 9

बीज मा सर्वभूताना विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम्।
बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम्॥

Know Me, as the primeval cause of all beings I am the understanding of the wise, the splendour of the illustrious.

VII 10

बल बलवतामस्मि कामरागविवर्जितम् ।
धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ।

I am the strength of the strong, untainted by desire and passion In beings I am *Kama* that is *not immoral*

VII 11

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।
मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वह तेषु ते मयि ॥

The natures that are classified as good, passionate or deluded, know that these are from Me, not I in them, but they in me

VII 12

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैर्भावैरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम्॥

All this world, deluded as it is by these natures, formed out of the three qualities, ignores Me, who transcend these and am ever abiding.

VII 13

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥

This divine illusion of Mine, caused by the qualities, is hard to overcome but they, who come to Me, cross over this illusion

VII 14

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।
मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥

Not every one sees Me, enveloped as I am in the illusion of creative activity. This ignorant world does not know Me, who have neither birth nor ending

VII 25

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत ।
सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यान्ति परन्तप ॥

Deceived by the opposing forces of attraction and repulsion all creation lives and moves in delusion

VII 27

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥

There are two principles in this world, the perishable and the imperishable the perishable is the sum of animate forms, the indestructible is firmly established, unchangeable

XV 16

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥

The highest principle is, indeed, another, described as the Supreme Self, He who pervades and sustains the three worlds, the Eternal Lord.

XV-17

यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।
अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥

Since I transcend the destructible as well as the indestructible, I am known in common parlance as well as proclaimed in the Veda as the Supreme Spirit.

XV-18

The universe moves according to what are known as the laws of nature. This code of nature is but the manifestation of the Supreme Will. God himself is not seen as such and as a whole. What we see of Him we are content to call by the name of physical and moral laws, and life proceeds as if wholly independent of God.

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥

All this world is pervaded by Me in My manifest aspect; all beings are fixed in Me, but I stand apart from them.

IX-4

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।
भूतभृन्न च भूतस्थो ममाऽऽत्मा भूतभावनः ॥

And yet beings are not rooted in Me, behold the scheme of My sovereignty! Myself, the origin and the support of beings, yet standing apart from them

IX-5

Notwithstanding the fact that God supports and governs all, we are ignorant of it, as the process is inclusive of ourselves and all our thoughts, reasonings and emotions. The laws of nature *are* the will of God. His will is manifested in the shape of what we see directly or by investigation, but which we choose to call by the name of Truth or Law of Nature The two are not different, nor can there be a variation between them Suppose a magician creates a tank of water and by the same magic fills it with fish and other watery animals with some understanding though limited. The fish must take the water and the tank and all the conditions of their life in the magic tank as "natural" and do not know that it is all but the magician's will, quite as much as they themselves are the will of the magician.

Even if he had created, not water and fish, but kerosine and fish living therein, and even if the kerosine changed into water and the water into kerosine on alternate days, the knowing fish would have taken it all as "natural" and made a synthesis of all that they observed and mentally codified it into a body of natural laws. They would be incognisant of the real author and controller. In the same way do the laws of physical nature hide God, though they are but the manifest embodiment of His will.

The following *sloka* expresses the ever present restrictions of the unchangeable law, though within that limitation, beings are free to move.

यथाऽऽकाशस्थितो नित्य
वायु: सर्वत्रगो महान् ।
तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि
मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय ॥

Reflect on this, that as the mighty air everywhere moving is yet fixed in the Ether, so all beings rest on Me.

IX-6

The will of God acts as the natural creative force of the world, *Yoga-Maya*, as it is termed in VII-25 quoted before. It is God that works throughout all the seeming diversities of life.

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।
भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥

Using Nature, which is Mine own, I create again and again all this multitude of beings dependant on and ruled by Nature

IX-8

मयाऽध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।
हेतुनाऽनेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥

Under My over seeing eye, Nature brings forth the moving and the unmoving, because of this, the universe revolves

IX-10

अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञः स्वधाऽहमहमौषधम् ।
मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥

I am the sacrifice, I am the rite, I am the ancestral offering, I am the herb, the *mantra*, the butter, the fire and the offering

IX-16

पिताऽहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः ।
वेद्यं पवित्रमोंकार ऋक् साम यजुरेव च ॥

I am the Father of this world, the Mother, the Supporter, the Grandsire, the Holy One to be known, the *OM*, and also the *Rik*, *Sama* and *Yajur*.

IX-17

गतिर्भर्ता प्रभु साक्षी निवास शरण सुहृत् ।
प्रभव प्रलय स्थान निधान बीजमव्ययम् ॥

The Path, Protector, Lord, Witness, Abode, Asylum, Friend, Origin, Dissolution, Foundation, Treasure, Seed imperishable.

IX-18

तपाम्यहमह वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च ।
अमृत चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन ॥

I send heat, I hold back and pour down the rain, I am immortality and I am also death, I am being, and I am also non being.

IX 19

CHAPTER V

RIGHT ACTION

Reverence for the past and the spirit of conservatism that characterize Hindu thought should not be mistaken for unprogressive rigidity In spite of its undoubted conservatism, in no other religion is there greater elasticity, freedom of thought, or scientific respect for absolute truth Hinduism has grown and evolved like every other living aggregate of thought and faith It has always displayed the boldest varieties of conception Various Hindu scriptures emphasise various aspects of the truth as the Hindu elders saw it The *Gita* evolves an ethic in advance not only of belief in mere ceremonial observances, but also of the recluse's life of mere abstention

The *Gita* emphasises that the activities of the world must go on The good man does the tasks to which he is called and which appertain to his place in society In all his activities he does things like others

outwardly; but inwardly, he maintains a spirit of detachment. He does everything without selfish motive and maintains equilibrium of mind in success and failure, pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow. Purified thus, the good man is qualified for further progress by constant meditation, prayer and devotion, and finally "sees himself in everything and everything in God". The *Yoga* of *Gita* consists in living a dedicated life in the midst of worldly affairs.

Right action involves true renunciation. What we should renounce is not action but selfish desire. We should liberate our activities from the bondage of selfish purpose. Work should be done in a spirit of duty done, and results should not be permitted to agitate the mind. This unselfish and detached attitude can and should be cultivated even while we are engaged in normal activities. Continual practice of this attitude of mind will lead, in the higher stages of progress, to the elimination of the difference between the way of *Yoga* and the way of *Sanyas.*

कि कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिता ।
तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥

What is action, what inaction? Even the wise are herein perplexed Therefore I will declare to you that action by knowing which you will be saved from evil

IV 16

कर्मण्यकर्म य पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म य ।
स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्त कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥

He who perceives inaction in action and action in inaction, he among men has real knowledge, even while performing all action, he is doing *Yoga*

IV 18

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भा कामसकल्पवर्जिता ।
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माण तमाहु पण्डित बुधा ॥

The learned deem him to have realised the truth whose plans are not shaped by desire, whose actions have been purified in the furnace of knowledge

IV 19

Activities free from selfish attachments do not leave a *Karmic* residue

यदृच्छालाभसतुष्टो द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सर ।
सम सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वाऽपि न निबद्धयते ॥

Content with whatsoever comes to him of itself having transcended the pairs of opposites free *from envy balanced in success and failure,* though acting he is not bound

IV 22

The *Vedas* prescribe sacrifices, but the *essence of sacrifice is not ceremonial but* the giving up of selfish desires Sacrifices, therefore, may take various forms according to the true interpretation of the Vedic teaching All sacrifices involve activities This, *too,* is a reason why action should not be given up but liberated from the trammels of desire and shaped into sacrifice

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम ।
नायं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्य कुरुसत्तम ॥

What remains after sacrifice is food that gives immortality Those who eat it go to the changeless *Brahma* He who does not sacrifice gains nothing even in this life no need then to speak about the coming life

IV-31

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।
कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानेवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥

Many and various sacrifices are thus spread out in the *Vedas* for the aspirant to choose Know that all these arise in action, and thus knowing you shall be free

IV 32

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञ परन्तप ।
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥

Better than ritualistic sacrifice that is performed with various articles prescribed therefor is the sacrifice founded on wisdom All prescribed actions attain their complete fulfilment in true knowledge

IV 33

Jnana-Yagna, "sacrifice by knowledge," is that sacrifice which results from detachment while engaged in life's activities *Jnana* (ज्ञान) manifests itself and, therefore, consists in the cultivation of a detached attitude in all work Such an attitude results from and at the same time leads to progressive realisation of one's unity with the rest of the world and of the whole world with God Action becomes free and sinless once the motive of action is freed from selfish aims

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञानाग्नि सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥

Burning fire reduces the wood to ashes, even so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes

IV 37

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥

There is no purifier in this world like knowledge, he that perfects his practice of self less action finds that knowledge in himself in due season

IV 38

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् ।
आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ॥

He who even while acting has, by *Yoga*, learnt to practise renunciation, who has cloven asunder doubt by knowledge, who is ever watchful over himself, actions do not bind him

IV-41

तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनाऽऽत्मनः ।
छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥

Therefore, with your sword of knowledge destroy this ignorance born doubt that dwells in your heart, and stand up, established in *Yoga*

IV-42

Thus, there is no real distinction between the way of renunciation and the way of duty performed True renunciation and true performance of work are identical, the essence of both being the giving up of personal desire.

साङ्ख्ययोगौ पृथग्बाला प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिता ।
एकमप्यास्थित सम्यगुभयोर्विन्दते फलम् ॥

Children, not those who know, speak of the *Sankhya* and the *Yoga* as different, he who is duly established in either, obtains the fruits of both

V-4

अनाश्रित कर्मफल कार्यं कर्म करोति य ।
स सन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रिय ॥

He, that performs such action as is his duty, not looking forward to the fruit of such action, is a *Sanyasi* as well as a *Yogi*, not he that gives up the household fire and sits inactive

VI-1

य सन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योग त विद्धि पाण्डव ।
न ह्यसन्यस्तसकल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥

That which is called renunciation, know thou that as *Yoga*, for no one can become a *Yogi* who has not renounced plans and desires

VI 2

Once personal desire is got rid of, and the unity of all existence is realised, and as a result thereof, the correct attitude of detachment is developed, one is a recluse even though engaged in all kinds of social activities.

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रिय ।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥

He who has yoked himself to *Yoga*, whose self is purified, whose self has triumphed and whose senses have been subdued, whose self has, indeed, become the self of all beings, although acting he is not affected thereby.

V-7

कायेन मनसा बुद्धया केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।
योगिन कर्म कुर्वन्ति सग त्यक्त्वाऽत्मशुद्धये ॥

Yogis, having abandoned attachment, perform action merely using the body, the mind, the reason, and even the senses as instruments for the purification of the self

V-11

The *Gita* thus lays reiterated emphasis on the performance of duty as preferable to attempts at renunciation of activities. The eighteenth chapter, which summarises the teaching of the *Gita*, though named *Sanyasa*

Yoga, starts with the following *slokas*:—

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं सन्न्यासं कवयो विदुः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः ॥

Sages accept as *Sanyasa* the renouncing of works that are motived by desire The relinquishing of the fruit of all actions is called *Tyaga* by them

XVIII-2

नियतस्य तु सन्न्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते ।
मोहात्तस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तितः ॥

Renunciation of duties that are prescribed is not proper it is declared that such relinquishment is due to delusion and is a sign of *Tamasic* nature

XVIII 7

कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन ।
सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलं चैव स त्यागः सात्त्विको मतः ॥

The performance of prescribed duty out of the sense that it ought to be done, not caring for or desiring the fruit thereof is regarded as pure *Tyaga*

XVIII 9

न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माण्यशेषतः ।
यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागीत्यभिधीयते ॥

Nor, indeed, can embodied beings ever completely relinquish action he who succeeds in relinquishing the fruit of action is known as *Tyagi*

XVIII 11

This is re stated with a stress on complete surrender to the Divine Will and unqualified dependence on Grace, in the following *slokas*

> सर्वकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्व्यपाश्रयः ।
> मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम् ॥

Though ever engaged in performing all the actions appertaining to his station he who takes refuge in Me by My grace attains the eternal imperishable abode

XVIII 56

> चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः ।
> बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव ॥

Renouncing mentally all works in Me lost in the contemplation of Me and resorting to *Buddhi Yoga* ever fill your mind with Me

XVIII 57

The knowledge and contemplation of the true nature of Soul, Matter and God is, no doubt, the way to serenity of mind But the practice of a detached attitude, while performing our duties, is a necessary step to this serenity ज्ञान योग, *Jnana-Yoga*, which is the practice of serenity of mind by contemplation of the Truth, and कर्म योग, *Karma-Yoga*, which is

he practice of an attitude of detachment in ormal activities, are really complements of ach other. There is no real difference etween successful effort in either direction.

Serenity of mind cannot come by at-›mpting prematurely to withdraw from the orld. The merit of abstention from action es in the absence of personal motive or esire, and this is attained in the perfor-iance of duty unaffected by personal desire. hus *Sanyasa* and *Karmayoga* are the same.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥

Your business is with action only, never with results, so let not the fruit of action be your motive, nor let yourself be attached to in-action

II-47

योगस्थ कुरु कर्माणि सङ्ग त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्यो समो भूत्वा समत्व योग उच्यते ॥

Engage yourself in activities, established in *Yoga*, renouncing attachments and balanced even-ly in success and failure equilibrium is called *Yoga*.

II-48

लोकेऽस्मिन्द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयानघ ।
ज्ञानयोगेन साङ्ख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥

Men can follow either of the two paths, as I said That of *Yoga* by knowledge, of the *Sankhyas*, and that of *Yoga* by action, of the *Yogis*

III 3

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।
न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥

Man does not reach freedom from action by abstaining from activity, nor by mere renunciation does he attain perfection

III-4

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥

Nor can any one, even for an instant, remain really actionless, for helplessly is every one propelled to action by the qualities born of nature

III-5

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।
इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥

Who sits, restraining the organs of action, but dwelling in his mind on the objects of the senses, deludes himself and is called a hypocrite

III 6

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन ।
कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते ॥

But he is worthy who controls the senses by his mind, uses his organs of action without attachment towards sense objects and thus performs the *Yoga* of action

III-7

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।
शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिध्येदकर्मणः ॥

Engage yourself in right activities action is better than inaction inactive even the maintenance of your body is not possible

III 8

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।
तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसंगः समाचर ॥

Men suffer the bondage of *Karma* only when the activity is otherwise than for the sake of sacrifice to that end, free from attachment engage yourself in action

III 9

The first impulse of a religious mind is and, indeed, the older teaching displayed a leaning towards abstaining from activity and renouncing the world The *Gita*, however, definitely rejected this solution With inherited tendencies, it emphasized, action is inevitable Repression causes the mind to run on, even while externally restrained from finding

expression in action, and leads to hypocrisy or perversion; whereas the practice of the method of detachment trains the soul to liberate itself from the load of inherited qualities.

प्रकृते क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।
अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्ताऽहमिति मन्यते ॥

All actions are wrought by the propensities of material nature only. Deluded by self consciousness, the soul considers itself the doer.

III 27

तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः ।
गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते ॥

But he, who knows the truth about propensities and action, understanding that propensities express themselves, keeps his soul unattached

III-28

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥

Even the man of profound knowledge behaves in conformity with his own material nature Beings follow their own nature How will repression avail?

III-33

Now comes a clinching argument. You cannot set for yourself the plan of

renunciation and expect others to carry on the normal work of society while you stand out Social life must go on; and what you do, others must be expected to copy The ethic of the *Gita* is pre-eminently a social one What was good for great Janaka, it says, is good enough for all

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।
लोकसङ्ग्रहमेवापि सम्पश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि ॥

Janaka and others indeed attained perfection through performance of duties looking to the welfare of society also, you should work

III 20

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥

Whatsoever a great man does, other men also do the standard he sets up is followed by the people

III 21

The co operation of all is needed for the world,—of the wise as well as of the ignorant The ranks of the wise may increase, but meanwhile the co operation of the ignorant may not be neglected or disturbed.

सक्ता कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।
कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथाऽसक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम् ॥

The informed should toil with the motive of the social welfare without attachment, even as the uninformed toil, moved by desire for results

III 25

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसंगिनाम् ।
जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥

Let no man who has attained knowledge *unsettle the mind of ignorant people who are* moved by attachment to the results of action, but himself following the rule of *Yoga* let him *render all action attractive.*

III 26

प्रकृतेर्गुणसम्मूढाः सज्जन्ते गुणकर्मसु ।
तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान्कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत् ॥

Those on whom the qualities of matter have wrought their illusion are propelled to action by the attachments so generated, the man whose knowledge is complete should not unsettle the imperfect understanding of the weak minded

III-29

CHAPTER VI

THE PRACTICE OF MIND-CONTROL

The *Gita* teaching explained in the previous chapter is not a theory put forward to serve as a defence or an apology for those who are unwilling to withdraw from the world It is intended to be the basis for the actual moulding of men's lives, so as to develop a habitual and spontaneous attitude of selflessness and detachment As a duck swims in water and when it steps out sheds the water from off its back, so should we learn to move in the world, not wanting in expertness or tidiness or efficiency in work, but maintaining no selfish attachments Constant practice of control of mind is, therefore, essential

The enemies of good resolutions are lust, anger and greed He who wishes to develop detachment must be continually on the watch against these perturbations of the mind If thought is restrained,

the rest will take care of itself. The power of thought is great, for good or evil. If the mind is not restrained, desire will find its perch in the senses, seize our thoughts, pollute our intelligence and finally ruin us. Therefore the battle must be fought with desire, even while it seeks entrance in our thoughts.

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चित ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभ मन ॥

When stirred up, the senses of even a wise man, though he be striving, violently carry away his mind

II 60

तानि सर्वाणि सयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्पर ।
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥

Restraining them all, he should sit harmonised, his mind bent on Me, he whose senses are mastered, has his understanding firmly fixed

II 61

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुस सगस्तेषूपजायते ।
सगात्सञ्जायते काम कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥

When a man allows his mind to muse on the objects of sense enjoyment, a taste for them is created. Taste develops into passionate desire, and from desire follow causes for anger.

II 62

क्रोधाद्भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥

Anger produces delusion Delusion confuses the memory and understanding of things, from confused understanding follows the disintegration of the power of discrimination, with discrimination gone, the man perishes

II 63

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि ॥

The mind that follows the wandering senses carries away the understanding of the man with it, as the gale bears away the ship on the ocean

II 67

अर्जुन उवाच ।

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।
अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥

Arjuna said

But impelled by what does a man commit sin, though reluctant and as it were by force constrained?

III 36

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भव ।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥

The Lord said.

It is desire, it is anger, begotten by the passion principle of nature, all consuming, all polluting, know this as our enemy here on earth

III 37

धूमेनाऽव्रियते वह्निर्यथाऽऽदर्शो मलेन च ।
यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥

As smoke surrounds fire, as a mirror is covered over by dust, as the embryo is encased in the womb, the understanding is enveloped by this enemy.

III 38

आवृत ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।
कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥

This perpetual enemy of the wise, Desire, insatiable as fire, surrounds and imprisons the understanding

III 39

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।
एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥

It is said that this enemy seizes the senses, the mind and the intellect and thus closely surrounding and isolating the understanding, uses them to bewilder the soul.

III-40

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।
पाप्मान प्रजहि ह्येन ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥

Therefore, governing first the senses, slay this thing of sin, which otherwise will destroy knowledge and understanding

III-41

त्रिविध नरकस्येद द्वार नाशनमात्मन ।
काम क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रय त्यजेत् ॥

There are three gateways to hell, by which one's own ruin is worked,—lust, anger and greed, therefore let these three be renounced

XVI 21

एतैर्विमुक्त कौतेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नर ।
आचरत्यात्मन श्रेयस्ततो याति परा गतिम् ॥

Saved from these three gates of darkness man works out the good of his self, and reaches the highest goal

XVI 22

True happiness comes not from that which at first is like nectar but which in the end becomes indeed venom, but comes out of self-control which in the beginning is hard and bitter, but leads to supreme joy

सुख त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ ।
अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति ॥

Of three kinds of pleasure, that in which one by gradual practice rejoices and in which one finds an end to grief,

XVIII-36

यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।
तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥

Which at first is as venom, distasteful, but in the end is like nectar, that pleasure is said to be *Satvik*, born of the clarified understanding of the Soul.

XVIII-37

CHAPTER VII

MEDITATION

After practising an attitude of unselfishness when engaged in normal activities, the aspirant should advance towards an attitude of detachment as to results Success or failure should not agitate the mind Joy and sorrow should be met with balance of mind Pain and pleasure should be welcomed with equanimity as being impermanent and complementary to each other, and as arising out of the contacts of matter and having no effect on the soul It is one's own thoughts and one's own actions that affect the fortunes of one's soul, not the joy or the sorrow that comes from without

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥

Material contact produces cold and heat pleasure and pain These sensations are fleeting and insubstantial go through them unruffled

II 14

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥

The man who is not ruffled by these, who is the same in pain and pleasure, steadfast, he shapes himself for immortality

II-15

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥

Welcoming with equanimity, pleasure and pain, acquisitions and losses, victory and defeat, get ready for battle thus you shall not incur sin

II 38

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।
आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥

The pleasures that are contact born become, ndeed, wombs of pain They have beginning and ending, the wise do not rejoice in them

V.22

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।
कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥

He is a happy man and a Yogi who learns to withstand here on earth, ere he be liberated from the body, the force of carnal desire and anger.

V.23

The peace of the serene mind is the nearest approach on earth to salvation

योऽन्तःसुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥

He whose happiness is within himself, who derives joy within himself, who has a shining light within himself, that Yogi attains final liberation and is absorbed in *Brahma*

V 24

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् ।
अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥

Final liberation lies near to those who know themselves, the saints who have cast off desire and passion, and who have controlled their thoughts

V 26

यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः ।
विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥

With senses, mind and intellect ever under control, absorbed in the pursuit of final liberation, the sage, free from desire, fear and passion is, indeed, already liberated

V 28

If the unselfish attitude is by practice made almost spontaneous in normal activities, one is qualified to enter on the more difficult practice of serenity in the face of success and failure and joy and sorrow. This can be acquired only by a vigorous effort to get rid of material attachments and by realising that the highest happiness is within and not without.

आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।
योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥

For a sage who is seeking *Yoga*, performance of duty is declared to be the means; when he is well *confirmed* in the practice of *Yoga* serenity is declared the means.

VI-3

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते ।
सर्वसंकल्पसन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ॥

When a man feels no craving for the objects of sense or to be engaged in activities therefor, and is free in his mind of all such plans of action, then, he is said to be confirmed in *Yoga*.

VI-4

उद्धरेदात्मनाऽऽत्मानं नाऽऽत्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मन ॥

Let him raise the Self by the Self and not let the Self become weak, the Self alone is the friend of the Self, but the Self is also its own enemy,

VI 5

बन्धुरात्माऽऽत्मनस्तस्य येनाऽत्मैवाऽत्मना जित ।
अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेताऽत्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥

He who has conquered himself by self control finds a friend in the Self, but the Self verily becomes his worst enemy if he has not learnt to govern himself

VI 6

जितात्मन प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहित ।
शीतोष्णसुखदु खेषु तथा मानापमानयो ॥

The transfigured Self of him who has attained self control and equanimity is unruffled in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, honour and disgrace

VI 7

Meditation is a great aid to secure serenity of mind After one has trained oneself to be a *Karma-yogin*, that is to say, to do the duties that fall to one's lot without selfish desire and without agitation as to success or failure, one gains by occasionally withdrawing from the

world for deep and undisturbed meditation. *Yoga* in the following *slokas* is the practice of such meditation:—

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।
एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥

Let the *Yogi* constantly engage himself in *Yoga* retiring to a secluded place, alone, with mind controlled, and free from possessions as well as wishes.

VI 10

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।
नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् ॥

Seating himself in a clean place, on a fixed seat neither very much raised nor very low, covered over with cloth, shin and *kusha* grass,

VI 11

तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।
उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥

There, having steadied the mind, controlling thought and the functions of the senses, sitting on his seat, he should practise *Joga* for the purification of the self

VI 12

सम कायशिरोग्रीव धारयन्नचल स्थिर ।
सप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्र स्व दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥

With body, head and neck erect, not shaking, steady, eyes turned to the point of the nose and gaze not wandering,

VI-13

प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थित ।
मन सयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्पर ॥

With internal calm, fearless, firm in the vow of the *Brahmachari*, the mind well governed, thinking of Me, harmonised, let him sit absorbed in the thought of attaining Me

VI 14

नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नत ।
न चातिस्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥

Yoga is not for him who eats too much, nor to one who absolutely abstains from food, it is not for him who is too much addicted to sleep, nor is it to be attained by keeping vigils.

VI 16

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दु खहा ॥

Yoga, the destroyer of misery, is for him whose food, diversions, work, sleep and waking are all controlled and regulated

VI-17

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता ।
योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः ॥

The *Yogi*, whose mind is under control and who is absorbed in the *Yoga* of the *Self*, is likened to the steady flame of a lamp kept in a place where the air is absolutely still.

VI 19

Note the insistence on moderation in everything including austerities. The secret *of success is in steady practice in the* art of controlling thoughts which continually seek to run away with the mind; *and not in excessive severity of austerities.*

सङ्कल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषतः ।
मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्ततः ॥

Completely giving up all desires conceived in the mind and reining in all *the* senses, in every direction,

VI 24

शनैः शनैरुपरमेद् बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।
आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥

Let him use his *Buddhi* with steady application gradually to withdraw into *himself* and thus having made the mind abide in the Self, let him not think of anything

VI 25

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥

Each time the wavering and unsteady mind seeks to wander let him rein it in, and bring it under the control of the Self

VI 26

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥

The purest joy is for this *Yogi* whose mind has attained calm whose passion nature is quelled, who is pure and ready for absorption into the Divine Spirit

VI 27

The following *slokas* describe the man who has attained the ideal serenity of mind

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥

He who has no hatred, and is a friend of all living things, full of compassion without the feeling of 'I' or 'mine', balanced in pleasure and pain, and forgiving,

XII 13

सन्तुष्ट सतत योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चय ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मे भक्त स मे प्रिय ॥

Ever content, yoked to the Spirit, self controlled, resolute, with emotion and intellect dedicated to Me, he, My devotee, is dear to Me

XII-14

यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च य ।
हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो य स च मे प्रिय ॥

He who does not cause perturbation to other beings, and who is not perturbed at the world himself, who is free from the agitation of joy, anger and fear, he is dear to me

XII 15

अनपेक्ष शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथ ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्त स मे प्रिय ॥

He who desires nothing, is pure, right minded, passionless, unruffled, has renounced all worldly plans, he, My devotee, is dear to Me

XII-16

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्य स मे प्रिय ॥

He who does not rejoice or grieve, who does not hate or long for anything, who has given up, looking on things as welcome and unwelcome, such a devotee is dear to Me

XII 17

सम शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयो ।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु सम सगविवर्जित ॥

Alike in mind to those who are friendly to him or unfriendly, and looking with even composure on fame and obloquy, alike in cold and heat, pleasure and pain free from attachments,

XII 18

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी सतुष्टो येनकेनचित् ।
अनिकेत स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नर ॥

Valuing praise and reproach alike, silent, wholly content with what comes, homeless, firm in mind devoted, such a one is dear to Me

XII 19

The serenity of mind thus developed by the regulation of activities and constant meditation is ever liable to be disturbed by the forces of the physical body These tend to operate in spite of self-realisation, but the wise man protects himself by continually reminding himself of the truth

प्रकाश च प्रवृत्ति च मोहमेव च पाण्डव ।
न द्वेष्टि सम्प्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काक्षति ॥

. He who welcomes illumination of spirit, the urge to activity, and' even delusion as they come, but does not long for them again when they disappear,

XIV 22

उदासीनवदासीनो गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते ।
गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येव योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते ॥

He who keeps his inner spirit unaffected and unruffled by the changing moods, saying to himself, "The qualities of my material body are moving," stands unmoved.

XIV-23

समदुखसुख स्वस्थ समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चन ।
तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसस्तुति ॥

Equally welcoming pleasure and pain, self sustained, brave, to whom a piece of brick and a nugget of gold are just the same, who makes no difference between those that are dear and those who are not, and the same in praise or blame,

XIV 24

मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयो ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीत स उच्यते ॥

The same in honour and calumny, the same to friend and foe, abandoning all worldly under takings—such a one is pointed out as having transcended natural propensities

XIV-25

CHAPTER VIII

INHERITED PROPENSITIES

As an aid to charity in judging others and to serve to calm the mind in moments of agitation, it is very useful to remember why men act wrongly. There is a load of congenital qualities with which men begin and which tends to find expression whenever the individual fails to control himself Think of your own weaknesses when you see others fail Again, behind everything is God, the chief and real Actor We should not be disturbed by the constant appearance of what seems to our limited understanding to be evil

न कर्तृत्व न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभु ।
न कर्मफलसयोग स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥

The soul when blessed with enlightenment knows that it does not exercise any agency or perform action or attain the fruits of action It is the qualities of material nature that carry on

V 14

नादत्ते कस्यचित्पाप न चैव सुकृत विभु ।
अज्ञानेनावृत ज्ञान तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तव ॥

The enlightened soul is unaffected by evil-doing in any or by kindnesses either True understanding is darkened by ignorance, thereby are creatures deluded

V-15

प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वश ।
य पश्यति तथाऽऽत्मानमकर्तार स पश्यति ॥

He sees the truth, who perceives that the force of material nature really brings about all actions, and that the Self is actionless

XIII 30

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनपश्यति ।
तत एव च विस्तार ब्रह्म सम्पद्यते तदा ॥

When he perceives the common basis of all diversified existence and how everything shapes itself and spreads out from it then he realises *Brahma*

XIII-31

अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात्परमात्माऽयमव्यय ।
शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥

Being beginningless and without material qualities, the immutable and pure soul, though seated in the body, neither acts nor is affected

XIII 32

सत्व रजस्तम इति गुणा प्रकृतिसम्भवा ।
निवध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥

Goodness, passion and darkness are the qualities, they are matter born while in the body the soul, though itself immutable, is bound fast by these qualities

XIV-5

नान्य गुणेभ्य कर्तार यदा द्रष्टाऽनुपश्यति ।
गुणेभ्यश्च पर वेत्ति मद्भाव सोऽधिगच्छति ॥

When the soul realises that there is no agency other than the qualities, and understands that which is higher than the qualities, he attains My spirit

XIV-19

न तदस्ति पृथिव्या वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुन ।
सत्व प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्त यदेभि स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणै ॥

There is no being on earth or even in heaven among the gods, that is liberated from these three qualities born of matter

XVIII 40

स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्ध स्वेन कर्मणा ।
कर्तुं नेच्छसि यन्मोहात्करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत् ॥

Impelled by the motion of your own nature, that which from ignorance you desire not to do, even that helplessly you will do.

XVIII 60

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥

The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, and through the forces of material nature causes all beings to move as if mounted on a revolving machine.

XVIII-61

The lesson of the above *slokas* is that the qualities with which men start on their life-journey shape their activities. We should not judge anyone as an evil-doer, nor pride ourselves upon our good actions. The *slokas* are not to be interpreted as if men were absolved from responsibility. The *Gita* makes it clear that it is only by personal effort and by the practice of self-control that we may be delivered of the character-load with which we begin. That men are moved by 'congenital qualities born of previous *karma*,' which defeat all efforts at ignoring them, is a teaching to cultivate charity towards others and serenity in ourselves, and not a doctrine sanctioning contempt or cruelty towards others, or irresponsibility for ourselves. The self is, in one sense, not

CHAPTER IX

HOPE FOR ALL

There is none who need despair, on the ground that his sins have been too great Prayer and repentance purify the soul. According to the *Gita*, whatever might have been said in the Hindu codes as to observances, neither sex nor caste makes any difference in the way of Grace

समोऽह सर्वभूतेषु
न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रिय ।
ये भजन्ति तु मा भक्त्या
मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम ॥

The same am I to all beings, there is none hateful to Me nor dear They who worship Me with devotion are in Me, and so am I in them

IX 29

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।
साधुरेव स मन्तव्य सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि स ॥

Even if he who has greatly sinned worships Me, with undivided heart, he too must be treated as good, for he has resolved well

IX 30

क्षिप्र भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्ति निगच्छति ।
कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्त प्रणश्यति ॥

Speedily he becomes purified in spirit and attains abiding peace know for certain that he who gives me his devotion never perishes

IX 31

And, particularly referring to caste and sex disqualifications,-

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य
यऽपि स्यु पापयोनय ।
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रा
स्तेऽपि यान्ति परा गतिम ॥

They who seek refuge in Me though born in the lowest condition and be they women or *Vaishyas* or *Sudras*, they also attain the highest abode

IX 32

Genuine prayer and repentance are counter-motions in the field of *Karma* against previous acts and go to make up for hem But no one may deliberately indulge n sin on this assurance, that the sin may later be washed away True repentance, which alone can be of avail, does not come that way Genuine penitence s a motion of the mind involving intense pain and is itself a self imposed punishment,

a neutraliser and a corrective for past sins, but it so acts only in the measure that it is truly suffered. Repentance and self-abasement, and appeals for grace and mercy are operations of the mind, not words or ceremonies gone through or absolution procured from priests, although words and ceremonies and priests may be helpful through inspiring association, and as aids to focus the mind in penitent thought. A man may deceive himself or others, but he cannot deceive Truth itself. You may mislead the patient about his temperature or deceive your customers about the weights of things sold to them, but you cannot cheat the thermometer or the scales themselves.

Forms of worship do not matter. They may vary, but are all in reality one. This is the great, all-important and unique attitude of Hinduism towards so-called religious differences.

ये यथा मा प्रपद्यन्ते तास्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

In whatsoever way men approach Me, even so do I bless them, for the paths men take from every side reach Me.

IV.11

This is most remarkable, when we consider how long ago, this truth was seen and laid down for men's guidance, and in such emphatic terms.

येऽप्यन्यदेवताभक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विताः ।
तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥

Even the devotees of other gods who worship them full of faith, even they worship but Me, though irregularly

IX-23

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥

Whatever is offered to Me with devotion, be it a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, is welcome to Me as the devoted offering of a striving soul and I accept it

IX 26

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥

Whatsoever you do, whatsoever you eat, whatsoever you offer in sacrifice, whatsoever alms you give, whatsoever penance you undergo, do it as an offering unto Me

IX 27

कामैस्तैस्तैर्हृतज्ञाना प्रपद्यन्तेऽन्यदेवता ।
तं तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियता स्वया ॥

They whose understanding has been siezed by various desires go to other gods, resorting to various external observances, conforming to their own natures

VII 20

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्त श्रद्धयार्चितुमिच्छति ।
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥

Whatever devotee seeks to worship whatever form with sincere faith, It is I who bestow on him that firm faith

VII 21

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते ।
लभते च ततः कामान्मयैव विहितान्हि तान् ॥

He, filled with that faith seeks to worship such aspect and thereby obtains his desires, I verily decreeing them

VII 22

Naturally, the *Gita* must be taken to have referred to the unity of goal of all forms of worship that were prevalent at the time, and not to the varieties of religions and religious practices that came into existence much later But the doctrine is stated in such wide terms and so broad-based on essential principle as to be applicable to every variety of religion

CHAPTER X

BUT NOT GODLESSNESS

While it is true that whatever may be the form of worship, God is reached, the *Gita* condemns godlessness in no uncertain terms, describing the materialist code of life in language that seems almost up-to-date.

The materialist does not admit that there is anything by itself right or wrong.

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुरा ।
न शौच नापि चाचारो न सत्य तेषु विद्यते ॥

Men born with evil tendency know neither what is right to do nor what is right to give up doing, neither purity, nor even right behaviour, truth is not found in them.

XVI-7

The materialist theory of life is stated thus:

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम् ।
अपरस्परसम्भूतं किमन्यत्कामहैतुकम् ॥

The universe is not based on truth; it is not supported by any spiritual power; it is not ruled by God; it is brought about by the coming together of matter, by sexual attraction and nothing else: thus these men aver.

XVI-8

Godlessness leads to false ideas of progress and civilisation, exploitation and war.

एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः ।
प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्माणः क्षयाय जगतोऽहिताः ॥

Holding this view of life, these conscienceless men of small understanding undertake fierce deeds and become enemies of the world and lead it to destruction.

XVI-9

काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूरं दम्भमानमदान्विताः ।
मोहाद्गृहीत्वाऽसद्ग्राहान्प्रवर्तन्तेऽशुचिव्रताः ॥

Seeking to fulfil insatiable desires, moved by vanity, self-conceit and pride, holding fast to evil-ideas, through delusion, they engage in action with impure resolves;

XVI-10

चिन्तामपरिमेया च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिता ।
कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिता ॥

Giving themselves over to unnumbered cares until death, regarding the gratification of desires as the highest object, believing firmly that there is nought else in the world,

XVI 11

आशापाशशतैर्बद्धा कामक्रोधपरायणा ।
ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसचयान् ॥

Held in bondage by a hundred chords of hopes and expectations, given over to lust and anger, they seek by unlawful means to acquire wealth for the gratification of sensual desires

XVI 12

The pride of power and possession, b
it of the individual, the group or th
nation, and the destruction and anarchy
which it leads to are described below.

इदमद्य मया लब्धमिम प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम् ।
इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम् ॥

"This to day by me hath been acquired, that purpose I shall gain, this wealth is mine already, and this also shall be mine soon"

XVI 13

असौ मया हतः शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि ।
ईश्वरोऽहमह् योगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान्सुखी ॥

"I have slain this enemy, and others also I shall slay. *I rule, I command pleasures, I am perfect, powerful, happy.*"

XVI-14

आढ्योऽभिजनवानस्मि
कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया ।
यक्ष्ये दास्यामि मोदिष्य
इत्यज्ञानविमोहिता ॥

"I am wealthy, well-born; who else is there that is like me? I will perform sacrifices, I will give alms, I will enjoy." Thus deluded by ignorance,

XVI-15

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृता ।
प्रसक्ता कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ ॥

Agitated by numerous thoughts, enmeshed in the net of delusion, addicted to the gratification of desire, they fall into foul hell.

XVI-16

Pride of race and the vain-glory of so-called culture or civilisation, or even philanthropy cannot make up for the sins on which it is all founded.

आत्मसंभाविताः स्तब्धा धनमानमदान्विताः ।
यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम् ॥

Vain, stubborn, filled with the pride and intoxication of wealth, they go in name through the performance of sacrifices for ostentation, contrary to scriptural ordinance

XVI-17

अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च संश्रिताः ।
मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः ॥

Given over to self conceit, hunger for power, insolence, carnal desire and anger, these mali cious ones hate Me in the bodies of others and in their own

XVI 18

Debasing oneself, or doing injury to others is equivalent to hatred of God, for He abides in the souls of all men and indeed suffers through them. See also XVII-6, quoted in the next chapter, p. 85

Any code of life based on the satisfac-ion of mere desire leads to destruction .et men worship God, profiting by the xperiences of those who have gone before

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥

He, who disregards the ordinances of the *Shastras* and follows the promptings of desire does not attain spiritual power or worldly happiness, or the highest goal

XVI 23

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥

Therefore, let *Shastra* be thy guide in determining what ought to be done or what ought not to be done Guided by what hath been declared by the ordinances of *Shastra* you should engage yourself in work in this world

XVI 24

The inheritance of knowledge that good and wise men have left behind as the result of their search for God and Truth is *Shastra* It is right that each generation of the human race should build on the foundation of the results of the toil of previous generations Otherwise we must be engaged in a *Sisyphean task of rolling the stone up for ever*

CHAPTER XI

IDEALS—AUSTERITIES—FOOD

Every man is born with a particular nature, the result of his *karma*, according to which is shaped also his faith. Yet, the faith that we nurse reacts on us. We should therefore set for ourselves good ideals. The action and reaction between tendencies and chosen ideals are brought out in the following *slokas*. Hope for progress lies in this interaction.

त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिना सा स्वभावजा ।
सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु ॥

Of three kinds is the congenital faith of men—spiritual, passionate and gross, hear them described

XVII-2

सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत ।
श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥

Everyone's faith is fashioned according to one's essential nature Man is made according to his faith, that in which a man places faith, he too is that

XVII-3

Not only should we fix our minds on right ideals, but all our activities should be regulated in view to upward evolution. There is no good but only harm in austerities undergone merely for vanity's sake, or in the hope of getting some advantage thereby.

अशास्त्रविहित घोर तप्यन्ते ये तपो जना ।
दम्भाहंकारसयुक्ता कामरागबलान्विता ॥

The men who perform severe austerities, unenjoined by the scriptures, out of vanity and self-conceit, impelled by the force of their desires and passions,

XVII-5

कर्पयन्त शरीरस्थ भूतग्राममचेतस ।
मा चैवान्त शरीरस्थ तान्विद्धयासुरनिश्चयान्

These foolish men, that torment the elements forming the bodies, and Me also, dwelling within *the body; know these as men of Asura resolves*

XVII-6

Tapas (तपस्) is performed in body, speech or mind. Austerity of body consists in conduct marked by rectitude, reverence, continence *and compassion. Tapas* of utterance consists in truthful, gentle and kindly speech, and in devotion to study

and recital of scriptures. The cultivation of mental equilibrium and purity of thought is *Tapas* of mind. *Tapas* should be practised without desire for any selfish fruit and as being good by itself. When done with the object of just gaining the respect of men or for ostentation, it is worthless, and when done in order to hurt others, or in a spirit of mere obstinacy, it is bad.

देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवम् ।
ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते ॥

Worship rendered to the gods, to the twice-born, to the teachers and to the enlightened, clean life, rectitude, continence and non-violence are said to constitute austerity of the body

XVII-14

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥

Speech that causes no annoyance, and which is truthful, loving and beneficial, the study and recitation of the Scriptures, these are declared to be austerities of the spoken word.

XVII-15

मन प्रसाद सौम्यत्व मौनमात्मविनिग्रह ।
भावसशुद्धिरित्येतत्तपो मानसमुच्यते ॥

Tranquility of mind, gentleness reticence, *self control* purity of thought these constitute austerity of the mind

XVII 16

Giving also is, according to the motive behind it, good, bad or worse We should give gladly and not grudgingly, and in a spirit of duty and not in expectation of a returning obligation, or even to gain the merit of alms-giving

दातव्यमिति यद्दान दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे ।
देश काले च पात्रे च तद्दान सात्त्विक स्मृतम ॥

That gift is considered pure which is made to one who is not expected to do something in re turn and is made with the feeling that the gift is a duty and is also made in the right place and time to a worthv person

XVII 20

यत्तु प्रत्युपकाराय फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुन ।
दीयते च परिक्लिष्ट तद्दान राजस स्मृतम ॥

That which is given with a view to get some thing in return or looking for merit and what is given grudgingly are deemed *Rajasic* gifts

XVII 21

अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते ।
असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥

Gifts made without propriety of place and time and to unworthy persons disrespectfully or comtemptuously are deemed of the nature of *Tamasa*

XVII 22

The food we daily take has its effect on our psychology and character It is divided into three varieties, good, *satvik*, destructive of serenity, *rajasik*, and wholly bad, causing deterioration of mind, *tamasik*

आहारस्त्वपि सर्वस्य त्रिविधो भवति प्रिय ।
यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु ॥

The food liked by men is also of three kinds as also sacrifice austerity and alms giving Hear thou the distinction of these

XVII 7

आयुःसत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः ।
रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्या आहाराः सात्त्विकप्रियाः ॥

The foods that promote long life and increase strength of spirit bodily vigour health joy and friendliness and which are juicy soft substantial and pleasant to the taste are agreeable to *Satvik* natures

XVII 8

कट्वम्ललवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरूक्षविदाहिनः ।
आहारा राजसस्येष्टा दुःखशोकामयप्रदाः ॥

The passionate desire foods that are bitter, sour, saline, over-hot, pungent, dry and burning. These produce sickness, pain and grief.

XVII-9

यातयामं गतरसं पूति पर्युषितं च यत् ।
उच्छिष्टमपि चामेध्यं भोजनं तामसप्रियम् ॥

Food that is not freshly made, food that is bereft of juice, stale food, and food that has gone putrid, leavings of food and food which is filthy, these appeal to men of tamasik nature.

XVII-10

CHAPTER XII

SURRENDER AND GRACE

The *Gita* recognises the difficulty of devotion in terms of the Impersonal and Absolute. The aspirant is, therefore, advised to practise contemplation of God in his personal aspect as loving ruler of the universe. Ever keeping Him in mind, engage yourself in all activities, and dedicate all your work to God as service and worship done to Him. Ultimately it is His Grace alone that can save us, giving us power of self-control, knowledge and peace, and protecting us from temptation, doubt, weakness and confusion. This aspect of Hindu faith is known as the *Bhakti* path of Salvation. It is, however, not an alternative to, but a complement of the practice of an unselfish and detached attitude in the performance of the duties that fall to one's lot. It is not a matter for discussion, which is the more important of the two. Either may be considered as the primary and the other as the com-

plementary part of the *Gita* teaching.

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

I take upon Myself the concern for the welfare of those who worship Me with undistracted mind, and have yoked themselves permanently to the Divine Spirit

IX 22

मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥

Their satisfaction and their joy consist in filling their thoughts with Me, and devoting their lives to Me, enlightening each other and *constantly conversing about Me*

X 9

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥

To these, ever harmonised, loving devotees, I give the *Yoga* of spiritual understanding by which they come unto Me

X 10

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥

Out of compassion for them, dwelling within their souls, I dispel the ignorance-born darkness with the lamp of true understanding

X 11

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥

The task of those whose minds seek to realise the Un-manifested is one of great difficulty for the nature of the Un-manifested is hard for the embodied to realise

XII 5

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥

Those who by dedication to Me renounce all actions and are wholly intent on attaining Me, and concentrate their minds in meditation of Me

XII 6

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥

Those whose minds are fixed thus on Me I speedily save from the ocean of life and death

XII 7

मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।
स गुणान्समतीत्यैतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥

He who worships Me with unswerving devotion crossing beyond the qualities of matter, fashions himself for absorption into the Eternal

XIV 26

There can be no stronger insistence on complete surrender to God and dependence on His Grace than in the following crowning *slokas* of the *Gita*:

तमेव शरण गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।
तत्प्रसादात्परा शान्तिस्थान प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम्॥

Put your trust in Him and have no other thought, by His Grace you will obtain supreme peace and the everlasting abode

XVIII 62

सर्वगुह्यतम भूय शृणु मे परम वच ।
इष्टोऽसि मे दृढमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥

Listen again to My supreme word, most secret of all You are dear to Me, therefore I emphatically declare it for your benefit

XVIII 64

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मा नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्य ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥

Give all your thoughts, your worship, your sacrifice and your salutations to Me, you *shall certainly come to Me I pledge my troth* to you, you are dear to Me

XVIII-65

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेक शरण व्रज ।
अह त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुच ॥

Do not depend on other articles of faith or rules of observance but surrender yourself completely to Me grieve not I will liberate you from every sin

XVIII 66

Nought avails but God and He will save us without doubt, whatsoever be our sins, if we grieve for them and surrender ourselves to His Grace

CHAPTER XIII

THE ONE-NESS OF EXISTENCE

Regulating conduct, controlling the mind, and dedicating all activities as worship unto the Supreme Being, the aspirant realises in course of time the one-ness of all existence The identification of self with all life and of all with the Divine is the *Jnana*, which the *Gita* wants the *disciple to strive to attain* *Folly surrounds* the soul, and wisdom is the process of liberation of the soul from this enveloping darkness Differences between the cultured and the uncultured, distinctions of life-forms, distinctions of high and low melt away in the enlarged and purified vision of the man who attains true enlighten-ment Even the eater of dog's meat becomes one with the rest

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।
तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥

When ignorance is dispelled by knowledge of the Self, knowledge shining like the sun reveals the Supreme

V 16

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिता समदर्शिन ॥

Sages look with equal eye on a *Brahmana* rich with learning and culture, or a cow, or an elephant or even a dog or an eater of dogs

V 18

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शन ॥

The soul, enlightened by *Yoga* sees himself in all beings, and all beings in himself all are equal in his eye

VI 29

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥

He who sees Me in everything, and sees everything in Me, to him I am ever present and he is ever present to Me

VI 30

सर्वभूतस्थित यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थित ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥

He who having firmly realised unity worships Me as abiding in all beings, that *Yogi*, what ever he does, abides in Me

VI 31

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम्॥

The understanding that enables one to see an immutable one ness in all beings, undivided though manifold in shape, know that to be the true Light

XVIII 20

The *Gita* lays down the highest ideals of self-control and realisation At the same time it is not mere philosopher's amuse ment, but a terribly earnest appeal to men and women to shape their lives according to its teachings and to do so at once It is for the young as well as for the old, for the most busy man of action as for those who have done with the turmoil of life It is a book for all time, no doubt, but even like other holy books, which are for all time, it must be understood on the background of the social order of the time and place wherein the book was written It was not made to be quoted as authority for modern movements for the abolition of untouchability or caste, nor can its inadequacy to serve such a purpose be a just or sensible criticism

than that which was allotted to me." In everything to be done in this world, some apparent evil is involved, but there is a purifying and enobling agent for it all, *viz.*, the unselfish attitude. The teaching, that work should be done and done well, not for the gratification of selfish desire but for the carrying on of social life, and that social co-operation is indeed worship of God, is applicable to every system of social organisation, the most ancient or the most modern. The insistence on social co-operation without selfish motives, and the plea that such an attitude of mind enobles and equalises all tasks should not be misread as a plea for any particular form of social order.

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरत. ससिद्धि लभते नर: ।
स्वकर्मनिरत. सिद्धि यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥

Man reaches fulfilment by each being intent on his own duty. Take it from Me, the goal is attained by him who is intent on his own duty.

XVIII 45

यत प्रवृत्तिर्भूताना येन सर्वमिद ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धि विन्दति मानव ॥

The performance of one's own duty is worship of Him from whom have emanated all beings, and by Whom all this is pervaded, and thereby a man attains the goal

XVIII 46

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुण परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वभावनियत कर्म कुर्वनाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥

Better is one's own duty, though un honoured, than the work of another even if well performed He who does the work indicated by his own nature incurs no sin

XVIII 47

सहज कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत् ।
सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृता ॥

Congenital duty, though involving defects, ought not to be abandoned All undertakings, indeed, are clouded by defects as fire by smoke

XVIII 48

असक्तबुद्धि सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृह ।
नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धि परमा सन्यासेनाधिगच्छति ॥

He who holds his inner Spirit unbound, whatever he may do, whose self is well controlled and who is free from desire, attains by such renunciation that Supreme Goal which is the aim of renunciation of action

XVIII 49

The aspirant should meditate on the Absolute and Eternal behind all the manifestations of birth, life, death and disappearance. Creation and destruction are mere appearance and disappearance, analogous to what a child may see in the appearance and disappearance of the world in the cycle of day and night. They are but the waking and sleeping, the day and night of *Brahma*. When man gets true Light, he realises the supreme unity of the Absolute with all that he sees, feels and does. The contemplation and realisation of this supreme one-ness is the end and aim of *Yoga*.

कविं पुराणमनुशासितार
मणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।
सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूप
मादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥

He who contemplates on the All knowing, the Ancient, the Ruler, minuter than the atom, the supporter of all, of form inconceivable, refulgent as the sun, casting no shadow,

VIII 9

प्रयाणकाले मनसाऽचलेन भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।
भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक् स त पर पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥

At the time of death, with steady mind, full of devotion, by the power of *Yoga* drawing together his life energy into the space between the eye brows, he goes to the Spirit transcendent and divine

VIII-10

सर्वद्वाराणि सयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।
मूर्ध्न्याधायाऽऽत्मन प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणाम् ॥

All the sense gates closed, and the mind con fined in the heart, the life breath sustained by *Yoga* and fixed in his head,

VIII 12

ओमित्येकाक्षर ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।
य प्रयाति त्यजन्देह स याति परमा गतिम् ॥

Uttering the sacred syllable, "*Aum*", thinking upon Me, he who goes forth, abandoning the body, he goes to the highest goal

VIII 13

अनन्यचेता सतत यो मा स्मरति नित्यश ।
तस्याह सुलभ पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिन ॥

To him who constantly meditates upon Me, not letting his thoughts swerve aside, to such who is ever yoked to the Spirit, I am easy of attainment

VIII 14

अव्यक्ताद्व्यक्तय सर्वा प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।
रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसज्ञके ॥

From the unmanifested all the manifested issue at the coming of day, at the coming of night they again disappear into what is termed the unmanifested

VIII 18

भूतग्राम स एवाय भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।
रात्र्यागमेऽवश पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥

This multitude of beings is thus involuntarily brought forth repeatedly disappearing at the coming of night and appearing at the coming of day

VIII 19

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातन ।
य स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥

Therefore verily there exists higher than this unmanifested, another unmanifest entity, ever abiding, which, when all things disappear, is not itself destroyed

VIII 20

पुरुष स पर पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।
यस्यान्त स्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिद ततम ॥

The Transcendent One, in whom all beings abide, by whom all this world is pervaded, may be reached by unswerving devotion

VIII 22

CHAPTER XIV

Advaita and Gita-discipline

A question may be raised at this stage by those who have only heard of or have a superficial acquaintance with the doctrine of *Advaita*. If the Soul's separate existence is the result of illusion and God alone exists, why should there be this toilsome effort at so-called liberation? Why should we not rest content with knowing the truth that God alone exists. This might well be so, were the illusion a mere optical illusion. The *Maya* has wrought its effect not only on the eyes, but on every one of our senses and on our minds, and has produced attachments, passions and turmoils of the soul. Rubbing the eyes alone will not do. We must wake up every atom of our being to the reality, because the illusion goes to the depth of our very being. Again, it is not enough to know that we should wake up. It is necessary actually to wake up. This real

and thorough awakening of our being is called liberation, and the process is the same *whether it proceeds on this basis of* waking up from an illusion, or whether it be deemed a process of self-purification and liberation from *Karma* by the Soul as a real *and separate entity. Sense-enjoyments* and attachment thereto confirm and add to the illusion. It is necessary to get rid of them in order to dispel the *Maya*. The preliminary knowledge gained from the teacher, that God and Soul are one but, for ignorance born of *Maya*, may be an aid in the process of *liberation or waking up, but that by itself is* not enough. The need for personal effort diminishes only as one approaches the goal of true enlightenment, and diminishes in the measure of our progress towards it.

Whether the individual soul be treated as a result of *Maya*, liberation consisting, then, in the removal of the illusion that brought about the idea of individual existence; or whether it be considered that the individual soul is a really separate entity, beginningless, free and clothed in matter, which must work *out its salvation by fitting itself for being*

received by God,—in either case, the process to be gone through is identical If the Soul's separate existence is an illusion, attachment to the objects of sense-enjoyment, and lust, greed and anger add to the illusion, and must be avoided

With real disillusionment, sins and attachments must automatically cease Conversely, a pure life and unselfish performance of duties and serenity of mind lead to realisation of the truth behind the veil Where attachments have not ceased, we may take it that the knowledge is unreal, only lip-service being rendered to theory and the illusion within is increasing, not diminishing True *Jnana* can come, and the great illusion be dissolved only by the same process as would be prescribed for liberation from *Karma* on the basis of the soul being a separate spiritual entity, according to the *Dvaita* Philosophy Thus it is that the *Gita* is a book of Life for all, irrespective of the doctrine of the ultimate nature of the Individual Soul

battle to the blind Emperor Dhritarashtra, describes the vision that was unfolded to Arjuna. It was of God, the All, embracing the whole universe not excluding either of the pairs of opposites, good and evil, beautiful and ugly, sweet and terrible, pleasant and painful.

सञ्जय उवाच ।

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन्महायोगेश्वरो हरिः ।
दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम् ॥

Sanjaya said

Having thus spoken, O King, the great Lord of Yoga, Hari, showed to Partha His transcendent Form as Lord of the Universe

XI.9

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपदुत्थिता ।
यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद्भासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥

If the splendour of a thousand suns could blaze out together in the sky, that might perhaps approach the glory of that great manifestation

XI 12

तत्रैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।
अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा ॥

Then the Pandava beheld the whole of the multitudinous universe, brought together and manifested as one single form in the body that the God of all Gods then assumed

XI-13

At sight of this great vision Arjuna burst into a hymn of praise

पश्यामि देवास्तव देव देहे सर्वांस्तथा भूतविशेषसंघान् ।
ब्रह्माणमीशं कमलासनस्थमृषींश्च सर्वानुरगांश्च दिव्यान् ॥

In Thy *form* O God, all the gods I see, crowds of all grades of beings *Brahma* the Lord, upon His lotus seat, all the *Rishis* and the serpent gods

XI 15

अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं पश्यामि त्वां सर्वतोऽनन्तरूपम् ।
नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादिं पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप ॥

With mouths, eyes, arms and trunks multitudinous, *I see Thee everywhere, of shape limit*less I see no beginning, middle, end, nor source of Thee Lord of the universe, Form All embracing

XI 16

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणं च तेजोराशिं सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम् ।
पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष्यं समन्तात् दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम् ॥

A mass of splendour, blazing all round with crown, mace, and discus, I behold Thee Like the blazing fire, like the sun, sight cannot bear Thee, immeasurable

XI 17

त्वमक्षरं परम वेदितव्य त्वमस्य विश्वस्य पर निधानम् ॥
त्वमव्यय शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता सनातनस्त्व पुरुषो मतो मे ॥

I adore Thee, ever abiding, transcendent, the goal of all knowledge Thou art the supreme abode of this universe, Thou art the changeless Guardian of Eternal Nature

XI 18

त्वमादिदेव पुरुष पुराणस्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य पर निधानम् ।
वेत्ताऽसि वेद्य च पर च धाम त्वया तत विश्वमनन्तरूप ॥

First of the Gods, Primeval Spirit, Supreme abode of all that lives, Thou art the Knower and Thou art that which is to be known, Thou art Heaven transcendent, Thou art spread over the universe, O Thou of shape unending!

XI.38

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुण शशांक प्रजापतिस्त्व प्रपितामहश्च ।
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्व पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥

Thou art Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna and the Moon. Thou art the Lord of the universe, the Grandsire Prostrations to Thee! A thousand prostrations! Again and again, I bow before Thee!

XI.39

नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।
अनन्तवीर्यामितविक्रमस्त्वं सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वः ॥

I bow in front of Thee, I bow to Thee behind. Prostrations on every side to Thee, O All. Of energy boundless, measureless in strength, Thou art the completion of every thing; Thou art All thyself.

XI-40

पिताऽसि लोकस्य चराचरस्य त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभाव ॥

Thou art the world's Father and of all that loves and stands, worthy of reverence, the greatest *Guru*. There is none like Thee. Who can surpass Thee, unequalled in power in all the three worlds?

XI-43

तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायं प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम् ।
पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम् ॥

Therefore I fall prostrate and offer salutations to Thee, worthy Lord; Thou shouldst bear with me as father does with son, as friend with friend, as lover with his beloved.

XI-44

CHAPTER XVI

CONCLUSION

We may now summarise our studies:

We are born with certain qualities and potentialities of body and mind as a result of the previous activities and attachments of the soul. This holds us in a strong grip. But we have the freedom to liberate ourselves. The soul's activities in its present body decide its future, whether it be partial or complete liberation from past *Karma*, or further bondage. The Grace of God can bring about liberation, however great may be the previous bondage. This is so, not only because of the inherent power of Grace, but also because the soul's efforts to obtain that Grace have themselves *Karmic* potency. The *Gita* teaches what these efforts should be, to which it gives the name of *Yoga*.

The *Yoga* of the *Gita* is a progressive and multiple process. There is no loss in

attempt and failure, as every sincere effort is a gain in itself. It consists of

(1) Control of the senses and purity of conduct, and regulation of the routine of life, ideals, worship, work, food, sleep, etc.;

(2) Unselfish, but none the less attentive performance of the duties to which one is called by one's natural fitness and place in the social organisation;

(3) Cultivation of an attitude of true detachment and an even spirit in the face of success or difficulty or failure, or causes for joy, grief or disappointment.

(4) Vigilant control of the motions of the mind, and the elimination of passions that disturb it,—lust, anger and greed.

(5) Occasional turning of the mind inwards, for silent, concentrated meditation; and

(6) Surrender to God's Grace

Each of these aspects of *Yoga* may be emphasised and given a separate name, such as Sankhya Yoga, Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Sanyasa Yoga, Adhyatma Yoga, or Bhakti Yoga But in practice, they are all mutually connected and inseparable, and so, all are combined in the *Gita* and brought together in one organic synthesis

It is possible that the reader of these pages may say The ideal of the *Gita* is good, but it is impracticable, ordinary men can never hope to attain it What good is it then to men in this world of reality?

This question may be asked not only in respect of the *Gita* teaching, but of all the great religions of the world All the faiths and all the scriptures present ideals that are impossible of complete attainment in the work-a-day world For example, who can maintain that the life and teachings of Christ can be truly and fully followed by the Christians that revere and worship Him as God. The same is

the case of the Koranic or the Buddhistic teachings. Yet it is true that every one of these religions has not only stirred great men's hearts and given strength to their souls, but is the daily bread of life to millions of common mortals, and but for them they would be like beasts of the field.

The *Bible*, the *Koran* and the *Gita* are like lamps that light our paths in darkness. We cast our own shadows on our path in spite of the lantern in our hands; every besetting temptation, doubt, fear or difficulty throws its dark shadow too in spite of the light we carry; and the way is a chequered pattern of light and shadow. Still, holding the light firmly in our hands we may walk fairly safe. If we let the light go out, we should be lost in the jungle. Not every one that swears by a book may be able to follow everything that is said therein; but if every one tries, life grows round the ideals When a whole people revere certain ideals. life is furnished with standards of conduct that save men from becoming mere beasts

of the field and hold them together. That we cannot be perfect is no objection to hold the light firmly in our hands, so that we may see our way amidst the shadows, and live like men even though, too often, erring. Why, are not the rules of mere physical hygiene impossible of being followed to perfection? No one thinks of discarding the rules of physical hygiene as a string of impossibilities and counsels of perfection; but wise men and women try as far as they can to abide by them and profit thereby. So should it be also with the care and protection of the Soul.

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥

There is nothing like waste of effort in this, nor is there any danger of retrogression by reason of short-comings in practice. Even a little of this *Dharma* saves men from the Great Evil.

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